

A photograph of a church service. In the foreground, a man in a plaid shirt and dark pants is seen from the back, holding hands with a young girl in a plaid dress and red tights. To the left, another young boy in a grey sweater and jeans is also holding hands. In the background, other people are visible, some with their hands raised in prayer. The setting is a church sanctuary with a carpeted floor and a drop ceiling.

21

DAYS OF PRAYER AND  
FASTING

4

2024

COMPASS CHURCH OF  
SOUTHSIDE

# 21 DAYS OF FASTING AS A CHURCH

*Some things only happen through prayer and fasting.*

## INTRODUCTION

As we start 2024, we are keenly aware of our need for the Spirit of God to guide our church individually and as a whole congregation. This time of seeking the Lord will be so important.

### **We would like to encourage three areas of fasting:**

1. We believe denial is a part of spiritual growth, so we ask that our membership set aside 21 days to fast from choice foods. This can vary within the church based upon health and opportunity. Every one of us can make a plan to fast from something. Some may choose to fast from meat, others may fast from sweets, and some may commit to a water fast. Pray about what fits your situation and join us for 21 days of fasting.
2. We believe stillness is part of spiritual discernment, so we ask that our membership set aside 21 days to fast from busyness. This means setting aside time to pray, reflect, and be quiet before the Lord. In a margin-less world, this will take conscious effort and planning. Schedule time each day for rest and meditation. Give yourself permission to say “no” to every opportunity so you can say “yes” to a slower pace.
3. We believe less media, screen time, and consumption of noise is an important part of hearing from the Lord. Make it your practice for 21 days to spend less time online and less time with your face in a screen. For some, this will be a major adjustment. It will be good for our souls to limit the things that distract our attention and influence our minds.

### **Why do this as a church?**

*“Nothing tends more to cement the hearts of Christians than praying together. Never do they love one another so well as when they witness the outpouring of each other’s hearts in prayer.”*

*- Charles Finney*

God wants us to pray for and with others. One of the mechanics of prayer is the shift we experience with and for others.

Read what Matthew 18:19 says, *“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.”*

### **We will get more accomplished by praying together than anything else we do.**

Just as some things are not accomplished except through prayer and fasting, it would seem that some things will not happen unless we pray together. Like a man with a car in the ditch, somehow when another brother or sister comes and puts their back against the bumper in prayer both together are able to see results.

When we pray, we share one another’s burdens and victories. When we pray as God wants us to pray, we exercise and experience empathy. Have a healthy habit of praying with someone at work, at church, at the gym, or wherever God puts you and watch what God will do with it.

### **Using the Devotional Guide**

We are grateful for all of our contributors to this year’s prayer guide. The booklet is written as a 21 day daily prayer journal with devotionals. Take time each day during these three weeks and seek the Lord. At the end of each devotional will be a prayer emphasis specific to our church family. By doing this together, we will be tuning our hearts together as we seek the Lord. Couples are encourage to read them together and pray. Families are encouraged to use this guide as a family devotional throughout the 21 days and a time to teach your children about prayer, fasting, personal devotional time, and seeking the Lord.

### **FASTING**

In the New Testament it was assumed that fasting would be a part of the normal devotional life of the believer.

*When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth; they have received their reward in full. - Matthew 6:16*

*Fasting should be a normal discipline in the church and life of the believer. Jesus expected His followers to fast, and He said that God rewards fasting. Fasting, according to the Bible, means to voluntarily reduce or eliminate your intake of food for a specific time and purpose.*

## What is the purpose of fasting?

Fasting is not an end unto itself, but a means of focusing our minds and bodies for a spiritual reason. Whenever you fast, do so for a reason that is mentioned or modeled in the Bible. Here are ten primary purposes for fasting mentioned in Scripture:

### 1. To strengthen prayer (e.g., see Ezra 8:23)

Numerous incidents in the Old Testament connect fasting to prayer, especially intercessory prayer. Fasting does not change whether God hears our prayers, but it can change our praying. As Arthur Wallis says, "Fasting is calculated to bring a note of urgency and importunity into our praying, and to give force to our pleading in the court of heaven."

### 2. To seek God's guidance (e.g., see Judges 20:26)

As with prayer, fasting to seek God's guidance isn't done to change God but to make us more receptive to his guidance. Fasting can show, as John Piper says, that "what we hunger for most, we worship."

### 3. To express grief (e.g., see 1 Samuel 31:13)

Expressing grief is one of the primary reasons for fasting. Ever notice that when you're moved to tears by grief you lose the urge to eat? When we grieve, our family and friends often have to plead with us to eat because our body's appropriate response to grief fasting. A prime example occurs in 2 Samuel 1:12, where David and his men are described as having "mourned and wept and fasted till evening" for their friends, their enemies and their nation.

### 4. To seek deliverance or protection (e.g., see 2 Chronicles 20:3 - 4)

Another common reason for fasting in the Old Testament was to seek deliverance from enemies or circumstances. In Scripture, this type of fast is generally carried out with other believers.

### 5. To express repentance and a return to God (e.g., see 1 Samuel 7:6)

This type of fasting helps us to express grief over our sins and shows our seriousness about returning to the path of godly obedience.

### 6. To humble oneself before God (e.g., see 1 Kings 21:27- 29)

"Remember that fasting itself is not humility before God," reminds Donald Whitney, "but should be an expression of humility."

### 7. To express concern for the work of God (e.g., see Nehemiah 1:3 - 4)

As with Nehemiah, fasting can be a tangible sign of our concern over a particular work God is doing.

### 8. To minister to the needs of others (e.g., see Isaiah 58:3 - 7)

We can use time we'd normally spend eating to fast and minister to others.

### 9. To overcome temptation and dedicate yourself to God (e.g., see Matthew 4:1 - 11)

Fasting can help us focus when we are struggling with particular temptations.

## How does one go about fasting?

- a. For an occasional fast, eat a light meal (fruit, vegetables, yogurt, etc.) prior to beginning. Drink a lot of water. Skip 2-3 meals and break the fast with fruit juices followed by a light meal. Avoid oils, dressings and starch for a couple of meals.
- b. When starting a regular discipline of fasting, begin slowly with a partial 24-hour (2 meal) fast once a week for several weeks while drinking fruit juices.
- c. Monitor your inner attitudes and maintain a worshipful attitude.
- d. Break the fast with a light meal of fruits and vegetables.
- e. After a few weeks, try a normal fast, drinking lots of water only.
- f. Always be careful not to call attention to what you are doing.
- g. After succeeding with this for several weeks, move to a 36 hour (3 meal) fast.
- h. Seek the Lord regarding extended fasts. Get additional information on conducting extended fasts and clear the fast with your physician. (People with certain physical conditions should not fast.)
- i. Remember that the major work of scriptural fasting is in the realm of the spirit.
- j. If skipping meals is not possible, try fasting certain types of foods (like sweets or soft drinks), or you can fast activities (like TV or sports). It's important to convert that time to devotional activities, not just abstain from them.

## What does fasting address?

Rescheduling to reduce busyness helps us reject the pride of life. Turning of the media helps us reject the lust of the eyes. Denying ourselves consumption helps us reject the lust of the flesh.

**Want to learn more about fasting? Here is a helpful QR code from Campus Crusade for Christ leading to a more extensive training.**



# DAY 1



## A Place of Solitude

*But as for you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. And when you are praying, do not use thoughtless repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. - Matthew 6:6-7*

In these verses, Jesus is teaching us how to pray. He tells us to pray in our "inner room." This should be a place of solitude, free of distractions, where we can be completely focused on the Lord. Our heavenly Father wants to have our undivided attention. He wants us to focus on Him, so that we can pour our hearts out to Him and allow Him to speak to us and grow our relationship with Him. I love that our creator God wants to be so personal with us!

I feel like verse 7 is meant to teach us that we do not have to be concerned about praying the right words or being systematic in our prayers. God wants us to simply talk to Him, tell Him what is on our hearts, and seek to hear from Him. Prayer should not be just telling God what we want Him to do. Prayer should be two-way communication between us and our heavenly Father. I wish that was always as easy as it sounds! Because of our lack of closeness to Him, it can be difficult at times to hear from the Lord. We must draw near to Him!

As we seek the Lord for the decisions that impact the future of our church, please pray that we may truly hear from the Lord and know His will.

*Father, thank you for desiring a true relationship with us. Please help us to turn away from the distractions of the world and humbly lean into You as we pray and seek You and Your will. Take away everything that prevents us from truly hearing from You. We love you, Lord! Amen.*

- Andy Sherrill

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting pray for our church to seek the Lord. We want to hear from God in these days.

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## DAY 2

### The Quiet Place

*But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray in seclusion. - Luke 5:16*

In a world where we are constantly bombarded with noise and information, it is difficult to be alone and quiet. We live in a culture of constant noise and distraction. It comes from so many sources social media notifications, text messages, emails, television, the list goes on and on. The problem is that noise and distraction cause our brains to have trouble focusing which generates stress. This is a problem for anyone that wants to be an apprentice of Jesus. Mother Teresa once said, "We need to find God, and He cannot be found in the noise and restlessness. God is a friend of silence." The point that she is emphasizing is that being alone with God is an important part of developing a healthy relationship with the Lord.

Throughout the gospels we see Jesus spending extended times in silence and solitude. After Jesus was baptized, he spent forty days in the desert praying before his temptation by Satan. Before Jesus appointed the twelve disciples, he "went off to the mountain to pray", and before his crucifixion he spent time in the garden alone in prayer. If quiet and solitude was key for Jesus and his relationship with the Father, the same is true for us. Spend some time alone with God. Make it a daily priority to find a time and place that is free from distraction to focus on prayer. A prayer for our church: During this time of prayer and fasting pray for our church to not be a distracted people. We need the wisdom that only comes from spiritual focus.

- Chuck Barker

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to not be a distracted people. We need the wisdom that only comes through spiritual focus.

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# DAY 3

## Jesus Interceded

*Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."*

Jesus is near death-having been crucified and hanging on a wooden cross. Here is one of the God-Head Three with all the power to save Himself. Yet, He didn't. He became sin and sacrificed His life for ours.

I'm reminded of this verse in a song, "He could have called ten thousand angels, but He died alone, for you and me." Amazing how we can't forgive people of the simplest things, but Jesus asked for forgiveness of those who were killing Him.

It's not uncommon for us to claim we have rights-we do have rights. We don't always have to exercise those rights. Jesus had rights. He wasn't guilty, but He was sentenced to death. He had the power to reverse His plight, but he prayed instead and chose to do His father's will. Maybe we should reconsider what is His will rather than what we think are our rights.

*Father in heaven, we are a selfish people. I pray that I can have the strength to overcome my selfish spirit. Please forgive me when I don't put Your will before mine. Help me to be forgiving. A prayer for our church: During this time of prayer and fasting pray for our church forgive others and set aside ourselves for the sake of the gospel.*

- Roger Reid

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church forgive others and set aside ourselves for the sake of the gospel.

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# DAY 4

## Confession of Sin

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, and You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight; so You are right in Your verdict and justified when You judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Yet You desired faithfulness even in the womb. My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart You, God, will not despise.*  
- Psalm 51:1-6;17

During my lifetime, virtues I have observed from the mature Christian men are humble and thorough recognition of inherited and constant sin, and the absolute necessity of a constant cleansing via God's Grace. These are qualities that I haven't always held in the forefront of my life. I have taken for granted the youthful health and vitality that God graced me with in my young adult life. Over time, it became very apparent to me that my very best day on earth is like dirty rags before my Lord (Isaiah 64:6). I am nothing, I have nothing, I can create nothing, I can express nothing, I can build nothing without God's Grace and Majesty in my life.

*Forgive me, Lord, for my constant transgressions and guide my unsteady path.*

- Kevin Jeffery

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to confess our sin before the Lord and for God to give us a heart of repentance.

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## DAY 5



### The Peace of God

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. - Philippians 4:6-7*

This devotional could be written for me just as much as by me. It is a constant struggle to not get all up in knots about my day to day circumstances. Just know this is as much for me as anyone else.

Have you ever been anxious: worried about something that has happened or might happen or hasn't happened? Isn't that human nature-to spend time focused on things we have no control over, things we can't change by the emotional drain of worrying. These verses point to the cure for your (and my) anxiety, and it is found in a person, not in a podcast or self help book.

"In Christ Jesus"- we see that it's all about Him. We come to God daily in prayer with our list of wants, like we are sitting in Santa's lap. The people in Jesus day were no different. They came looking for physical healing, for Him to heal them emotionally, and to see what He had to offer them. And that wasn't wrong. They were coming, to Him. Bring Him your petitions, yes-He wants to hear from you. And He knows what your heart really needs, is Him. Continue to approach Him, all the while thanking Him for all the specific ways He has blessed you and praising Him for Who He is. And then listen, as He through His Word continues to tell you of His great love for you and read about the mighty works He has done to be in relationship with you. His character has not changed. He was and is good and He truly does all things well, even though we can't always trace His plan.

As we continue to praise and thank Him for all the ways He has delivered us in the past, we start to trust His character more and more to do the same again and again, no matter the circumstance. And the peace God gives us through that relationship will sustain us and guard our hearts from worry and the anxiety that constantly threatens to steal our joy.

- Angie Weaver

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to find peace personally and as a church in God's provision and guidance.

# DAY 6



## God's Will For You Revealed

*Rejoice always, pray continually, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

For anyone who has ever wondered what the will of God is for your life... there it is! Right there, in black and white, He gives us an outline to follow. Let's break it down. "Rejoice always." Wait a minute. That seems like it may be hard to do! I've been through a lot of things that don't make me want to be very joyful. How does that work?

As a Christian, our joy comes from deep within. It's not the 'joy' you feel when you order take-out for dinner or your favorite team wins. That's temporary happiness. This is a deep, abiding joy that comes from the knowledge that you are a child of God and nothing can take that away. Next, "pray continually". Having a mind-set of prayer. With your everyday activities, be mindful of talking to God and seeing things through a Kingdom perspective. The Holy Spirit lives within us and is there to be our Guide. What an honor to have this gift, let's keep the communication with God open!

Lastly, He tells us to have a heart that overflows with gratitude. It is easy to focus on the negative. You will be blown away when you purposefully focus on the positive and that will be something that other people notice and desire to be around.

-Janelle Shell

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to be a grateful people who praise the Lord. God inhabits the praise of His people.

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# DAY 7



## When They Prayed

*And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.*

- Acts 4:31-35

It is noteworthy that nothing happened until the church started praying. Once they started praying, God shook some things up, the Holy Spirit filled some people up and the Word of God was boldly preached. What was the result of their praying: unity and generosity. Great power in their witness and great grace in their fellowship was the work of the Holy Spirit. Prayer is designed to adjust us to God's will, not to adjust God to our will. If God has not responded to what we are praying, we may need to adjust our praying to align with God's agenda. Rather than focusing on what we would like to see happen, realize that God may be more concerned with what He wants to see happen in us.

"A man may study because his brain is hungry for knowledge, even Bible knowledge. But he prays because his soul is hungry for God." - Leonard Ravenhill

As we pray we mature from self focus to hungering primarily for what God wants. Prayer rewires our mindsets, attitudes, and perspectives when we are led by the Spirit of God.

- Chad Graves

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to have unity and for God to empower us with bold witness and great grace.

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# DAY 8

## Pouring Our Soul Out to the Lord

When I think of the many examples of how some things only come through prayer in the scriptures, I go to the story of Samuel's birth. Hannah, his mother, was not able to have a child and her heart was so burdened. As was their custom, she and her husband went to the temple to offer the annul sacrifice.

Scripture says she was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. As she prayed her voice was silent but her lips moved so the priest thought she was drunk and chastised her. Her response was that she was troubled in spirit and had been pouring out her soul before the Lord, out of great anxiety and vexation. This is the type of praying that only the Holy Spirit can give words to (groanings too great for words). When our hearts are so heavy that we cannot speak, the Holy Spirit interprets our groanings into words for God to hear. Hannah's prayer was answered through the birth of a son, Samuel.

This is an example to us when we are so burdened by our need that we can no longer use words that the Holy Spirit intervenes for us before God.  
- 1 Samuel 1

*Lord, we thank you for the working of the Holy Spirit when our hearts are too burdened for words. May we as a people continue to see that in our great anxiety and vexation, You are there hearing and working in our lives.*

- Jeannie Langle

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to cry out in desperate need for the Lord.

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## DAY 9



### **That They All May Be One**

*I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that you sent Me. - John 17:20, 21 NKJV*

On the night of His arrest, Jesus prayed a very personal prayer. First, He prayed for Himself that He would glorify God in His death, burial, and resurrection. Second, He prayed for His disciples, that they would continue in the faith. Then, Jesus prayed for all those that would believe in Him. He prayed that they would love God and love each other. As a believer, Jesus was praying for me! If you have put your faith in Jesus, that prayer was for you, too! How awesome that we have a Savior so personal! Jesus prayed that we would be one in our love for God and each other. Jesus goes on to say that as the world sees that we, His church, love each other, they will see God's love for them. In contrast, when the world sees us argue and disagree among ourselves, they will see that we are no different from those who don't know Christ at all. In other words, the more we love God, the more we will love each other. It's when we take our focus off God, that we begin to focus on each other's faults. If we can't love our brothers and sisters in Christ, how will we ever love a lost and hostile world?

*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. - John 13:35 NKJV*

*Heavenly Father, help us to love each other, and love the ones who don't know You. Let them see Your love in us and let us see others through Your eyes. In Jesus name, Amen*

*- Keith Provence*

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to love one another as He has loved us.

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# DAY 12



## Turn On The Light

*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. - Matthew 5:14-16*

When a room is dark, we don't try to find the source of the darkness and shoo it away, we just turn on the light switch. God's word prescribes the same for the spiritual darkness of this world. Because we have been loved by Jesus, we have the power to love others. This shows the Light of the World to a dark and hurting land where there is no hope. The hope isn't you; you're just a bearer of it, a dispenser.

As we walk out a supernatural life right in front of others, they see that light. Matthew 5:16 says it's our responsibility! Everything we do for the Lord will glorify Him and show forth His Power to other people who feel powerless and sometimes insignificant. The light is unmistakable because it gives you peace in the chaos, joy in the hard times, and hope in the middle of darkness. The everyday walk of a person with the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit within them will shine brightly for all to see and draw others to them. This dark world is hungry for that "something different" that makes you stand out as one who has spent time with Jesus.

Do you remember a time when the light of Jesus shown through another person to bring you hope that desperately needed? In what way does your light shine in your family? Friends? Nonbelievers?

- Chris Stark

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to be a light that shines in the darkness.

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## DAY 15

### Childlike Faith

As a teacher, I've heard many things spoken from the mouths of seven year olds. The daily jokes, the sometimes unkind words, and most often, my name being repeated over and over. But I heard a conversation once that I will never forget. This particular year, we had a student in our class receive an injury that caused a wheelchair to be needed to move around at school. As students were preparing to go to lunch one day, I overheard them telling one another to meet at the basketball court during recess because they were going to pray for this injured friend. Of course, I thought that was sweet but did not think anything else about it. Thirty minutes later, I received a text that read: "look what's happening..." and a picture from a teacher on the playground. The picture was of a huge circle of first graders, gathered around and praying with our injured friend. Immediately, I began to weep and remember thinking "Lord, forgive me for not having faith like that."

In Matthew 18, Jesus said "unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Oh, to have this childlike faith, the boldness, to stop in the middle of whatever we're doing to pray. Whether we're working, cleaning the house, or scrolling through social media, we choose to step back, slow down, and have a conversation with our Father.

*1 John 5:14-15 says "and this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him."*

Having this childlike faith means we have complete confidence in Christ, knowing He hears our every word. Does this mean He will answer our every prayer? Not always, but it does mean we can come to Him any time, any place, and He will listen. Just like He did in the middle of the day on an elementary school playground for 25 first grader.

*Father, I thank You for hearing my every prayer. Help me to have faith like a child, to be bold and have confidence in You and your promises. You are such a good Father. Humble my heart and remind me to slow down and come to You, daily surrendering my worries and needs. To dwell in Your presence, in awe of your faithfulness. I thank You, praise You, and love You, Lord. In your Mighty and Matchless Name, Amen.*

- Jordan Shane

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to return to childlike faith and unashamed public faith.

## DAY 16

### Praying Like Jesus

A question or request can offer insight into the one who asks it. Or, put another way: Our requests often reveal our priorities.

Likewise, in Luke 6:45, Jesus stated, “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” Jesus’s statement surely includes the requests we verbalize to one another. It is out of our hearts and minds – and the spiritual condition of them – that we speak, ask questions, and make requests.

The principles above offer insight and bring emphasis to the importance of a specific request made of Jesus by one of His disciples in Luke 11. Up to that point in his Gospel account, Luke had recorded that the disciples had witnessed Jesus teaching with great authority, confounding the religious leaders with his wisdom and truth, healing multitudes of people, casting out demons, and raising a widow’s son from the dead. Having seen those heart-racing and jaw-dropping events, one of his disciples had a request for Jesus. The request is recorded in Luke 11:1:

*Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray ...”*

It was a simple request. It was likely a request shared by other disciples of Jesus. It was an observant and wise request. The disciple did not ask Jesus to share insights to help them to teach powerfully, answer questions well, heal miraculously, or cast out demons with finality. He wanted to learn to pray like Jesus.

Jesus prayed often (Luke 5:16), regularly (Matt 14:23), and early in morning (Mark 1:35). He prayed in dependence on the Father (John 17). He fervently prayed with the Kingdom of God as His emphasis (Luke 11:2-4). Only on two occasions does the Bible record Jesus praying for Himself (John 17:5 and Luke 22:42), and those requests were in submission to God the Father and for His Glory. Like Jesus, may we focus on praying regularly, in dependence on the Father, with a focus away from ourselves, and an emphasis on His Kingdom.

- Jody Smotherman

**A prayer for our church:** Let us long to learn to pray like the Son of God. The church, our community, our families, and our souls need praying that mimics the prayer life of Jesus. Lord Jesus, teach us to pray.

# DAY 17

## Prayer On Repeat

*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in tribulation, faithful in prayer. -Romans 12:11-12*

I have been praying a simple, specific prayer that has gone unanswered for over half my life now. I've wept this prayer in despair and sorrow. I've angrily demanded this prayer be heard and answered. I've begged God for just one small sign that this prayer's fulfillment is in His will.

Often, I have to remind myself of Elijah, on his face, praying seven times for rain amidst years of drought, each time expecting clouds to appear. (1 Kings 18) Elijah was obedient and prayed expectantly.

I look back on the fact that three times Paul prayed for the thorn in his flesh to be removed. (2 Cor. 12) Paul took his agony to the Lord and was joyful and content when his request was denied. Jesus himself prayed the same words three times before his immense suffering. (Matthew 26) He took His troubles, fears and sorrow to the Father, patiently trusting His plan for His life. Cry out to Him day and night. Lord of all, You are merciful and gracious, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

*Restore the zeal of my soul when I am weary. Jesus, you plainly say, "whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith." Help me to believe that my faithful prayers can uproot mulberry trees and move mountains. Amen.*

- Rachael Williams

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to faithfully intercede for others.

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## DAY 18

### 7 Passages of Scripture To Pray about Praying

*Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!*

*-Psalm 4:1*) Spend some time asking God to answer prayers. Ask God for the grace of a vibrant prayer life that increases the faith of all those who pray together.

*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. Romans 8:26* Spend some time asking God to help you know what to pray. Groan in stillness and wait for the Spirit patiently.

*Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:5-7* Ask for God's peace to take away anxiety.

*Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.*

*Colossians 4:2* Make a list of those who come to mind and pray for them by name and thank God for them. Text them and let them know you have prayed for them. Ask them is there anything specific you can pray for them.

*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Hebrews 5:7* Ask God to make your heart right through prayer. Reverence yourself before the Lord. Ask for Him to break your heart about the things that break His heart.

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. James 5:16* Clear your own conscience by spending time asking God to bring anything to your attention that you need to deal with.

*The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. Psalms 19:7-8* Prepare for the prayer time by meditating on and studying a passage that can be used to guide the prayer time. Ask God to illuminate the text.

**A prayer for our church:** During this time of prayer and fasting, pray for our church to experience spiritual breakthroughs.









